

A
Funeral Sermon
PREACH'D ON THE
Decease of the Right Honourable
The **LADY Elizabeth Cutts,**
Late Wife of the Right Honourable
The **L O R D Cutts,**
On the 5th of *December*, 1697. at
Kensington-Church.

By *William Wigan*, Chaplain in Ordinary to
His Majesty, and Vicar of *Kensington.*

L O N D O N,

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Preached on the Decease of the Right Honourable

The Lady Elizabeth Cutts.

Numb. xxiii. v. 18. latter part.

Let me die the death of the Righteous, and let my latter end be like his.

THIS Lord's Day being one of the Sunday days in *Advent*, wherein, by Order of the Church, we are put in mind of Christ's second coming to Judgment: And it being also a day on which we are to partake of the Holy Sacrament, shewing forth Christ's Death till He come again; it might not be unseasonable on it to meditate also on our latter ends, if so be we had not this special Monumental occasion from the Death of the Honourable, the Vertuous, and the Religious Lady *Cutts*. There is not indeed before your Eyes one part of the outward doleful appearance usual at such Solemn Services: To the Monuments of her

Lord's Ancestors, to the place of their Burial, ~~are removed~~ *the remains of that* Excellent Person. But tho that spectacle of Mortality, that object of True Sorrow, be not here present; the want of it, in order to create attention, or the want of Expressions suitable to her Worth, will (it is hoped) be supplied by your Remembrance, or rather View (as it were) of her so late presence in this Congregation: And by your knowledge of her Religious Deportment, her Exemplary Devotion, and Holy Life, truly imitable by any who prepare for a better World. And therefore, as none, who have the hope of Christians, but may wish they may pass their appointed Time in the same regular, modest, and pious Manner. So, tho Her days were few (in regard of what might have been expected, and was by all who knew Her, earnestly pray'd for) yet no Christians but may wish that they may die the death of the Righteous, and that their latter end, tho so sudden, may be like Hers.

Therefore, since these Discourses are intended for the Edification of the Living, and not for comfort, or any advantage to the Deceased; vouchsafe seriously to consider, how just an Occasion, and how lively an Admonition all here have, in this deplorable instance of the frailty of all humane Satisfactions, to mind their own latter ends and to Pray, and provide that, at any warn-

warning, or without any, they may be ready to obey God's summons, and depart hence.

For, Who is there in this Assembly, of what Condition, or Age soever, that, not Weeks since, might have expected survivance to this Honourable Person: To whom, as none but would have wisht, so none but would have been ready to promise, very many, and very happy days. But, (so vain and brittle are all our confidences!) Behold! How soon is all the expectation of Honourable Families defeated? How soon by a sudden stroke, is Health chang'd into Sickness, Sickness into Death, and the hopes and joy for an Heir, into a double Funeral? How little have availed the respects of Friends, the Honours and Titles of the Great, the Skill of the Learned, and the most unfeigned Prayers of the nearest, and most dear Relations? In the midst of all the contents of a High and Noble Condition, the near Promises of Posterity, the Vigour of Youth, with the Lustre of Beauty, and the esteem of all that honour'd such Vertue, Goodness and Piety. How, without any warning, by an immediate command, *dust is return'd to dust, and the Spirit return'd to God who gave it.* Since then we are all made of the same Clay, and know not how near our appointed change may be, may we all prepare to give an account for what we have done in the Flesh. What is it then, that will afford

afford us Little Consolation; while we look on the frail estate of our Bodies, or the guilt of our Souls? What will support us when we behold the Pit which may soon gape for us? and when our selves shall stand on the brink of Eternity? What is it will enable us to endure the thoughts of having our Bones crumbl'd to dust, and of our Souls appearing before the Judgment Seat of the Great, the Living God?

We see how far all that is valued in this World, can go, The Wealth, the Pomp, the splendor of Attendance, the kind offices of Friends, and the Tears of dearest Relations, accompany what is Mortal but to the mouth of the Grave; and then, the Body once so cherish'd, adorn'd, and honour'd is committed to the Earth, to silence and putrefaction. But yet, (blessed be God,) by whose just sentence all this comes to pass) there have been in other Ages, and are in this, very many Christians, who sensible of the weakness of their Bodies, and the stain of their Natures, of the terrors of Death, and the greater terrors of Judgment after Death; have yet not only with Patience waited for it; but thro' Faith in the Blessed Jesus, have earnestly long'd for their dissolution.

Since then we cannot be so vain as to hope to live here for ever; since we know, that as Generations have past: so this Generation shall pass away:

away: Of all them who have gone before us, whom would we chuse to be with? with whose Souls, of all such whom we have read of, or heard, or knew, would we venture to be in an Eternal State? We know that all the Sons of Men, or all that profess the Christian Faith, have not liv'd after the same manner: As their Faces, their Statures and Conditions have differ'd; so have their deeds been more unlike. There have been such as have been, and are yet, Children of disobedience, have liv'd without God in the World, as if they were sure to die as the Beasts: and there have been such, who perswaded that their Souls were Immortal, and that their Bodies shall be rais'd again, have serv'd and lov'd and prais'd God, and persever'd faithful unto Death.

Into these two sorts all the sons of Men are divided. Here they are not always to be distinguished by us, by what they act, or by what they enjoy: But wondrous will the difference be of their future conditions. To all who are living, and hear the Word of Truth, God gives their choice, which of these two sorts of Men they will follow, and hereafter be with them for ever. Which of these do we seriously think it wisdom to be in the number of? whose Lot would we cover? would we be with them, who have minded only temporal and sensual things: or would we, as this godly, deceased Person, mind
above

above all things a future Eternal Concern: And wish each of us: *Let me die the death of the Righteous, and let my latter end be like his.*

These are the words of *Balaam*, a Prophet, hired by *Balak* King of *Moab*, and brought up into the high places of *Baal*, that from thence he might curse the People of *Israel*. But God put different words into his mouth; and by him pronounceth a Blessing on them: He foresees and foretels, *v. 9.* That *Israel* shall not dwell alone, nor be reckoned among the Nations: That he shall increase in this World, as the Sand of the Sea, or the Stars in Heaven, *v. 10.* Who can count the dust of *Jacob*, and the number of the fourth part of *Israel*? But, However he is amazed at the prosperity of God's chosen People; however he admires their multitudes, or their strength, beyond all that, he sees somewhat that is far more desirable; and wishes for himself a different Blessing, and such as is beyond all earthly advantages: He prays not so much for the Life, as the Death of a True *Israelite*: That is, not only the easie and timely departure in a good old Age, which God promised to the Sons of *Jacob*, if they kept his Commandments; but in a more mystical sence (as some even ancient Jewish Interpreters explain it). *Let me be as the Righteous, and where they are after Life.* An Heir of Paradise, and

and with them who shall not see the face of Hell.

A very wise wish; if that had been enough to make *Balaam* happy: But he loving the wages of Unrighteousness, forsook the right way, and fell by the Sword of the *Israelites*, *Numb.* 31. 8. And may we not infer from *S. Peter's* warning ^{2 Pet. 2.} us, not to follow his way, That he died not the ^{15.} death of the Righteous.

The dumb beast rebuked the Prophet: And the Prophet, who possibly receiv'd no benefit from his inspired knowledge, may yet by this wish, instruct us: we may therefore inquire why we may desire to die the death of the Righteous, and to have our latter end like his.

For death it self is far from being desirable: And tho the rich will, with the Son of *Sirach*, cry out: *O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee, to a man that lieth at ease, and rest in his pos-* ^{*Ecclm.* 41. 1.} sessions; to a man that hath nothing to vex him? Yet even the Poor and the distressed, and the most Valiant cannot, without some trembling in secret, view it approaching; even *Christ* himself cryed out, *O my father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me.*

This dread is implanted in us (among other reasons) That we who groan under many Evils and Miseries, (which make Life often burdensom) may endure to live, till we are ordered to depart, by him, to whom alone belong the issues of Life
and

Heb.

and Death. Accordingly, He who made, hath past sentence on us: *It is appointed for all men to die*: No one hath been able to save himself, or those whom he loves; tho he may have liv'd many years he shall see the Grave, and be gather'd to his Fathers. And yet tho this be most certainly known, together with the uncertainty of the Last Hour: yet few but are surpriz'd by it: and if it give long warning, it is fuller of Terror, the pains, and the ruins of the Body, with the decay of the Faculties of the Mind, together with the Agonies that are long struggled with, are more terrible than Death it self. And when the last moment is past, how amazing is the change? Those Persons who were so much courted, or dreaded, how must they say to Corruption, *thou art my Father*, and to the Worm, *thou art my Sister and Mother*, when they go down to the bars of the pit, when they rest together in the Grave? For our days are appointed, beyond which we shall not go. The Light, and whatever is joyous in it, must be forsaken. Of all our Furniture we shall take with us but a Shroud; in all the World only for a while we shall have a few feet of ground: Our Memory be forgotten, and our Place know us no more. The Righteous have no privilege or exemption. Original Sin hath tainted all Constitutions: To it the best of Men have added their own Offences to make them more Mortal:

Their

Job 17.

14.

Their days are few, and evil: and they go to the house appointed for all the Living. For, *Abraham* is dead, tho' stiled the Righteous Man by God himself: and the Prophets where are they? They are long since fallen asleep: nay, the Son of God himself gave up the Ghost: *He humbled himself to death, even the death of the Cross.* All his Disciples have drunk of the same Cup: even the most beloved one, the Evangelist who lay in his bosom, before his Lords coming, saw Death. And they of whom the World was not worthy, were afflicted, tormented, slain with the Sword.

*Job 30.
23.
Isa. 41. 2.*

Since then the Righteous die as the Wicked: since their days are few, and often fewer: since they even now suffer for righteousness sake: and are, many of them, in the eye of the World, most miserable: since the same event happens to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not, why should we desire to die the death of the Righteous, and have our latter end like his?

The Reasons for this Wish are very weighty. For,

I. *The Righteous are best prepar'd for death:*
and

II. *For what is to follow after Death.*

For, However terrible the apprehensions of it may be to Man, as naturally as to other Creatures: Yet, He hath cause to be afraid of it for a

Rom. 6. farther reason. For He dieth not as the Beast,
23. Death is not only a Law of Nature, but it is
the wages of sin. And what we suffer is a part of
 that vengeance which is due to transgression, and
 therefore it is a passage to a Judgment that can-
 not be avoided, and to a Life that shall never end.

Of this Truth there are mighty presumptions:
 from the great consent of Nations (who have
 been far from communicating their first notions
 to each other) from the strength of Evidence,
 which in Courts of Justice relies on this Belief,
 from the appeals of oppress'd and injur'd Persons
 to a future Tribunal, from the stings and remorse
 of Conscience which they have felt and confess,
 who have been guilty of heinous Crimes, and
 been above common Justice: and from the ex-
 ceeding unwillingness to die, which notorious
 sinners have express, tho in pain and misery to
 others intolerable. But since God hath in his
 holy Word revealed the cause of our Mortality:
 and that there is another Life, and a second
 Death, as sure as there is a God that judgeth righ-
 teously; so surely is the death of the Righteous to
 be wisht, and a latter end like his. We know,
 That the grace of God which bringeth Salvation unto
 all men, hath appeared in the world, teaching us
 that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should
 live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present
 world, looking for that blessed hope and glorious ap-
 pearance

Tit. 2.
11, 12,
13.

pearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Therefore, since all must appear before his Judgment Seat, to give an account for what they have done in the flesh: *What is the hope of the hypocrite, and the unrighteous person, tho he hath gained much, when God taketh away his Soul? How is he prepared to meet his God? The sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed: Tho he may have sung rest often to his Soul, tho he may have eat, and drunk and been exceeding merry, yet when sadness, usual in old age, and the days draw on in which he finds no pleasure, what comfort can he have, if he look back on the time he hath past without God in the World, or if he look forward on an incomprehensible Eternity? All his delights are vanished away: All for which he denied God, in his deeds, hath forsaken him: and then to remind him of his former joys, is like to Abraham's telling the Rich Man in Hell, a cross the Gulf, Son, Remember that thou in thy life time receivest thy good things.* This Admonition nearly resembles one of the Torments of the fallen Spirits, the memory of whose former Blessed Estate inflames their anguish in the place of endless Misery.

But if there be no comfort in looking back, there is none for such a person, when he shall hear the summons, *Thou fool, this night shall thy Soul be required of thee?* Then whose are all those things

things for which thou didst hazard thy Eternal Salvation? Then all that the impenitent Soul can wish for, is, That, (contrary to the misgivings of his Heart, and the Word of God) he may be blotted out of the Book of Life, and he may sink into an Abyſs of Oblivion.

Who can expreſs the aſtoniſhment of a Soul; which being on the confines of this and another World, hovering on its trembling lips, not able to ſtay, and not daring to depart, is yet ſure to periſh for ever, if there be a Register in Heaven; if there be a Reſurrection from the Dead; if there be a Heaven and a Hell? Surely when all the fruits and profits of Sin are weigh'd againſt this extreme danger, no Chriſtians will pray, *Let me die the death of the wicked.*

For, (blessed be God) tho' he in the height of Pride, or during his eager purſuit of Power and Wealth, may never think of his latter end, or what is to follow it; yet when by God's Judgments on the Earth, or by his immediate Viſitation, he ſees he muſt die, then without any Hypocriſie, he prays that *he may be numbred with the children of God, and that his lot may be among the Saints.* Some indeed of the Heathens encourag'd themſelves in their wicked ways, by hearing that at their death a few worthy Men among them question'd Providence, and counted Vertue an empty name, becauſe they were overcome when they

they fought for a reputed good Cause. What would the insultings of sensual Men over Religion be, if so many pious Persons on their death-beds renounc'd as heartily their good Works; and Faith in God, as there have been, and are wicked Christians, who abhor the remembrance of their past deeds of darkness? of their rioting and drunkenness, their chambering and wantonness, their blasphemies, and their enmity to the Cross of Christ? How would the credulity of godly Men be laugh'd at, if as weighty and unsuspected Witnesses, deposed at their last gasp against the Belief of the Life to come, and the Joys of Heaven; as there are undeniable Witnesses who depose against the Lusts of the Flesh, the Lusts of the Eye, and the Pride of Life? assuring us that this world's Pomp, which so soon passeth away is not worth our utmost endeavours: and that they are truly Wise, who mind the One thing that is necessary, that which shall never be taken from them? How often do we hear ungodly Parents, and others, warn in their last Sicknesses, such as they love, to avoid the reigning sins of the Age, as the road way to Perdition; and exhort them to follow Holiness, as they hope ever to see God? For That will only bring Peace at the last. But they who are Righteous before God; when the time of their laying aside their Tabernacles draws near, they repent not of their past:

past Repentance, nor adjure their Children to abstain from like Faith; neither do they counsel them, not to forego things present and temporal, for those that are not seen, for those that are Eternal: But on the contrary, abounding in hope full of Immortality, they know it is best for them to be dissolved, and to be with Christ: In those last moments (so full of horror to others) to the Righteous their Light increaseth: They have Peace which passeth all Understanding, and such Joys, as are foretastes of the Bliss of Eternity. For, Who in that extremity can be animated with so well grounded a Courage, as he who is taught, That being called by the Grace of God to the Knowledge of his Will, being confirmed in it by the operations of the Spirit, he is united by Faith, and participation in his Holy Sacrament, to Christ our Head, and knows therefore, that through Death his Saviour hath destroyed him who had the power of death, and deliv'ed them, who through fear of death, were subject to bondage?

What other reasonings of serious minds have ever suggested such consolation as the Scripture hath afforded to thousands, in all Ages, whose Love stronger than Death, relying on these precious Promises, hath made them more than Conquerors, through him that loved them? Are the Arguments drawn from Philosophy of equal force? or have they had a like blessed effect?

Such

Heb. 2.
14, 15.

Rom. 8.
37.

Such as these; That what we suffer is the lot of all Mankind: That it is a Decree that must be obeyed; it is a debt, a tribute due to Nature; an Eternal Sleep. That therefore it is to no purpose to afflict our selves for what cannot be avoided: That since all things must come to an end, as the greatest Persons, so the noblest Cities, the best founded Empires, and even the World it self; therefore Men ought not to wonder that they are so frail, nor murmur because they are so Mortal. How weak are these Arguments in respect of such as we have from Revelation, which sheweth us, That tho for our sins, and our Forefathers, we are subject to Pain, Misery and dissolution, yet we are still under the Eye of God, who by sending his Son to die for our sins, and rise *Rom. 8. 1.* again for our justification, hath declared, That to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, there is no condemnation, and that nothing shall be able to separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

What also are the duties wherein a Righteous Man is to exercise himself, and in doing of which he desires to end his days? Are they, that are enjoined by our Holy Faith, such as he needs to be ashamed of, whoever believeth his Soul is Immortal, and that he must appear before a God infinitely Just, Holy and Almighty? Would any Rational Man wish that he may die, denying

ing the Existence, or the Providence of a Supreme Being: Blaspheming his Name, or scoffing at his Worship, dishonouring his own Parents, or murdering his Brethren, defiling their Bed, or injuring their good Name, or their substance; or will any one blush, and have his Heart reproach him in his last Sickness, for not having walkt in Lasciviousness, Lusts, excess of Wine, Revellings, Banquetings and abominable Idolatry? Will his Conscience then upbraid him for not having devour'd the Fatherless, and Widows Houses, which then are to be left behind, to an ungrateful Heir or a stranger? or will he then Pray, May my Soul be with them who have despised the Preachers of Righteousness, and who are undone for ever, if there be a Judge of the Living and the Dead? or rather will any one who is Wise, when his Eyes are to be closed, when his Breath is departing, and he must never more see this Light; then be exceeding glad, if through God's Grace, his past Life hath been a constant course of Honest dealings towards all Men, (possessing his Vessel in Sanctification, and his Portion with content) and of acts of Humanity and Charity to his Brethren, of Reverence to his Superiours, and unfeigned Devotion to his God? And will he not then Pray, That he may be found not having his own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through Faith of Christ.

1 Pet. 4.

3.

Phil. 3. 9.

Christ: Having the Saviour of the World to intercede for him, and to offer up the Merit of his infinitely satisfactory Death; and so give up the Ghost, crying, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly? Is not such a Christian best prepar'd to leave this World? Who would not with *Balaam* wish this end? *Who would not die the death of the Righteous?*

II. *For the Righteous are best prepar'd for what is to follow after death.*

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints; It is but a passage to a far more desirable state. They who depart hence disappear, but are not lost; They sleep, but are not dead for ever. Their Spirits vanish not into soft Air, but are committed into his hands, who is able to keep, and will restore them faithfully to their Bodies at the last day. Blessed then are they, who having seen an end of their sufferings, having laid aside their earthly Houses, in which being burdend they groan'd, shall then receive the end of their Faith, the Salvation of their Souls. Then they arriv'd in a safe Haven, in a place of Everlasting Rest, shall with joy look back on what they have been deliver'd from, and with amazement on what they are admitted to. They shall bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, for freeing them from the Tribulations and Persecutions, which they either long endur'd, justly fear'd, or from their Heart pitied in their Bre-

thren: then they shall no more tremble under the Chastisements of a Father, or the Judgments of an offended God: Then all Tears will be wip'd away, and all possibility of Grief will cease. Then they shall no more labour under the burden of Years, or more grievous weight of Sins: They shall not cry out, *Wo is me, that my soul hath long dwelt with them that hate peace.* Or, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* But then they shall see that their light Afflictions which were but for a moment, shall work for them, a far more exceeding, eternal weight of glory: When the Sun of Righteousness shining on them, shall make them shine as Sins in the Kingdom: When they shall always be with Christ, and not see darkly as in a Glass, but face to face see God as he is, who then will be all in all.

Psal.
120. 6.
Rom. 7.
24.

Matt.
17. 14.

For the accomplishment of this hope, the Righteous wait, looking into the Grave without astonishment, as seeing beyond that Gulf, the place where Mortality shall be swallowed up of Life: And therefore when others tremble hearing of the Worm that shall never die, the Fire that never shall be extinguish, and the dying that shall never end, the true Disciples of our Lord encourage themselves with the assurance of their going into their Country above, and entering into a Building, not made with hands, everlasting in the Heavens: That they shall be admitted into a Paradise, where no tempter shall come, no Sin shall

shall endanger their Blessedness; but they shall be with Christ, that they may behold and enjoy the Glory to which God hath exalted him. In this perswasion the Primitive Christians used at the Funerals of Martyrs and Confessors, with great joy to sing Psalms and Hymns of Thanksgiving, thereby shewing that they firmly believed that those Servants of Christ had received the Reward of their Sufferings: They carried also Lights burning before their Corps, as before Conquerors, blessing God for crowning departed Saints with rays of the same Glory wherein their Redeemer shined; and hoping that following the same steps, they should partake of the same Happiness.

But it is not only the blessed state of the Souls of the Righteous which makes their latter end to be desirable; but that also of their Bodies: They, tho' committed to the Earth, tho' laid in the Dust, rest in Hope: They do but wait for the sound of the Trumpet of the Archangel of God; and then they shall be raised never more to see Corruption; when the hour shall come, in which the Grave shall give up its Dead, and the Sea shall very faithfully give up its Dead.

As certain as Christ our first-fruits is risen, as He the First-born from the Dead, (however once despised, crucified, committed to the Sepulchre) in his Humanity is at the Right Hand of the Father; so certain will be the Resurrection of all Mankind: The hour is coming in which all that are in their

Graves, shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: *They that have done evil to the Resurrection of Damnation, and they that have done well to the Resurrection of Life.* This is the blessed conclusion of their Days, who for the Merits of their Saviour are accepted as Righteous before God: This Death is surely to be desired, and every one from his heart may pray, *May my latter end be like his.*

Pro. 21.

29.

But if we would not have this prove a meer fruitless Wish, as it was to *Balaam*; if we would not have our desire, like that of the fluggards, kill us; whoever long for the death of the Righteous, must live his Life. You have heard that his diseases, or griefs, or agonies in departure, are not usually less, or easier, than those of other Men: But his Peace of Mind, his Joy in Conscience, his resignation to God's Will, and above all, his Faith in the blessed Jesus, (that by it being justified, he shall also be glorified) These make his latter end desirable. Imitate we then their Conversation, whose Death we cover; exercise we our selves to have a Conscience void of Offence towards God, and towards Man; mortifying our Corruptions, and dying to the World before we leave it: And then when our race is finish'd, when we have fought the good fight, doubt we not but the righteous Judge will give us the crown of life, which he hath prepar'd for all that love his appearance.

In Belief that this Honourable Person liv'd the Life, and died the Death of the Righteous, we pay

this

this respect, and give this Testimony to her Pious Memory: *Mourning as they who have hope*, and assur'd that such as *sleep in the Lord shall be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in Light*. For such our charitable Hope, we have here very Christian grounds, and would to God, That for all to whom we perform the like last Offices, we had the like comfortable Prospect. Give me leave, for the glory of God's Grace, and the Edification (as it is design'd) of such as hear, especially of the same Sex, to give some short account why she may justly be propos'd for an example, and the conclusion of her days be wish'd for. As the outward advantages which this Noble Lady enjoy'd, were visibly eminent, and in the eye of the World valuable, as Birth, Youth, Beauty and Honourable Relation: So the endowments of her Soul are represented as far more to be esteem'd, and accordingly would have shin'd forth if her modesty had not veil'd them. They who knew her from her infancy, assure us, that she had the early blessing of a Religious Education: That she could not remember the time that she began to serve, to pray to, and to praise God; That betimes there appear'd signs of a sanctified Nature in her younger behaviour: That she remember'd her Creator in the days of her youth, and even then laid a foundation for the life to come: That a more beautiful mind shewing it self adorn'd with all the Vertues of her Sex, added still Lustre to outward

ward comeliness; and growing in stature she grew in favour with God and her Parents. That, that fair Morning was overcast with no Clouds, no Tears were shed for any unhappy blemishes of heedless Youth. That the more she experienc'd and tasted in her Soul how good the ways of God were, and what peace of Conscience and serenity of Mind, arose from them, the more she delighted in God, and in Religious Duties: That this her practice of True Piety influenc'd all her Words and Conversation: So that as the Vertuous Woman, *She opened her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue was the law of kindness.*

Pro. 31.
26.

The Rules of her Life, which she had written, and I have read, were confirm'd and approv'd by her constant observance of them: In them how truly a Christian course did she prescribe to her self? How truly to be recommended from this place? Enjoyning her self to be sure to begin the day with the praises of God for his preservation of her in the night; and with earnest Prayers to be kept in his Fear, and under his Protection all that Day: To read the *Psalms* and portions of Scripture appointed for the Day; by which she might be made wise to Eternal Salvation: To meditate on it, in order to improve in godliness and all respective duties to her Maker, and all others: Then not to suffer the remaining hours to be wasted in vain amusements, or over-curious dressing; but setting to such Work as

as became her Sex, and was useful in her condition: *So her works* (as the wise **Womans**) *praised* Prov. 31. *her, and the ways of her household they commended her.* And having past the Morning in vertuous Employment; at a set time in the Afternoon she retired to Prayer, and Reading, and Meditating: And in the Evening, surveyed her Actions, and examin'd them, as strictly as any domestick accounts: Then offer'd her Evening Sacrifice of Praise for the Mercies of the day past, and by Prayer recommended her Body, Soul, and Spirit to the same God, for the safety and refreshments of the night, and lay down to sleep, as one who might wake in Eternity.

Moreover, what was practis'd in secret, and in the closet, broke forth and manifested it self in the publick Service of God. For how remarkable was her very reverend deportment in his House? How full of awe meet for the place of his more special Presence, and the celebration of his most Holy Mysteries and Sacraments? no straying looks, no contrivances for utmost ease, no sign of thoughts wandring far from his Service: But a seriousness suitable to the gravest of years, and a devotion as might have become her, if she had known how soon she was to appear in Spirit before the Living God.

Such exemplariness in all Vertue and Piety, as it appear'd betimes, so it ended not but with her last. What was so laudably begun, was steadily and happily prosecuted; insomuch, That if we reckon

reckon her stay on Earth by her proficiency in what was worthy of Praise and of good report; we shall scarce believe that her course was finished at Eighteen: In years so subject to frailty, wilfulness and folly; and in an age so addicted to Pride, excess of Vanity, and indifference for Religion.

But here we may be ready to expostulate, Why was so excellent a Christian so soon, why so suddenly snatcht away? Why only shew'd, and begun to be known here, and then hastily removed? Altho it be sufficient in general, to answer, It is the Lord's doing, and therefore it is as it ought to be: Yet hath God in his Word revealed very satisfactory reasons for such his dealings. He hath let us know that the Righteous are often ~~removed~~ ^{recalled},

Isa. 57. 1.

(not in wrath, but in mercy) ~~from the world to home~~ ^{from a place of danger}; That they are thereby secured from any hazard of their future Blessedness. Above all we are sure that no departed Soul will complain of being too soon removed hence into Heaven. That ~~Abel~~ the first of Adam's Sons who pleased God, died by a sudden stroke, tho the youngest, and that that Patriarch who walkt with God was translated hence, before he had seen half the days of some of them who lived before the Flood. And that the Son of Jeroboam, Abijah, died a Child, because in him was found some good toward the Lord God of Israel. Therefore the Righteous are never prevented with Death, for they are in rest

Gen. 5.
24.

1 Kings
14. 13.

For,

for, Honourable Age is not that which standeth
 in length of time, nor that is measur'd by num-
 ber of years, but Wisdom is the grey head, and
 an unspotted Life is old Age. So that in this oc-
 casion may we not apply what is said of *Enoch*?
 he pleased God, and was beloved of him, so that
 living among sinners he was translated: yea spec-
 ially was he taken away, lest that Wickedness
 should alter her Understanding, or deceit beguile
 her Soul. Therefore being soon consummated,
 he fulfilled a long time; and Youth being soon
 perfected, riseth up in judgment against the many
 years and old Age of the Unrighteous. Who-
 ever then have lived so well, may be reputed old;
 once they have lived to a blessed purpose: If
 any of 70, or 80 years, are to count no more
 of their time, than what they have spent accord-
 ing to their Duty, they will prove much younger
 than this Pious Person; many grey heads will be
 found *Infants of days*. Therefore this deceased
 Christian having answered the end for which God
 sent her into the World, having been faithful in
 the talent of Time, however little, that was intrust-
 ed with her; she is as truly Blessed, as any devout
 Woman, who may have waited longest in the
 temple of God, for the redemption of Israel: For,
 only those Persons die not untimely who expire
 to happiness, and they have lived to the truest
 old Age, who live with God to all Eternity.
 Neither will the suddenness of her death (by

Wisdom
of Sol. 4.
 8, 9, 10,
 11.

Ver. 13.

Isa. 65.
 20.

Luk. 2.
 38.

Convulsions which seized her Intellectuals and Vitalisat once) cause her latter end not to be wisht for.

Hooker
Ecc. Pol.
p. 46.

Indeed in the Litany of our Church we pray against sudden death; not that the Salvation of all who so die, is therefore questionable; but because such a Death is too often liable to rash and uncharitable censures: and because a leafurably dissoluzion affords time to perfect Repentance to pass an uncorrupt Judgment on the pleasure of Sin and the Vanities of the World; and by disingaging the Soul from sensible Objects, disposeth it for entrance into a Blessed Eternity. However, They who order their Conversation every day as if it were their last, are never surprised; their future condition is not doubtful. Quick riddance out of Life may be requested by such Christians, and be bestowed on them as a benefit.

Since then the sentence was to be undergone, the speedy execution of it was desirable, in behalf of a person provided against it; and it may be reputed a favour that she was hastily taken away. Thereby she was excused from the apprehension which fore-run Death, and make it more dreadful; she indur'd not the languishings, the irksome Days, and worse Nights, that by slow degree wast such as are Consumptive: nor did she tremble at the violent assaults, and tacking Torments & tedious, often returning Diseases. She was spared the grief, which would have pierc'd her Soul, beholding the tears, the unfeigned sorrow, and d

straction

straction, of an afflicted, disconsolate Father, for his beloved, for his only Child, in that very moment wherein he expected the happy increase of his Posterity. And more especially, in parting from her Noble Lord, she was excused Agonies, which only could exceed those which she lately felt, (which were almost mortal) when he for a few months was obliged to leave her.

But hereby how doth God warn all, Young no less than aged Christians, what a necessity there is of a daily watchfulness, and how blessed it is to be constantly serious and devout? What a condition are they in, who by a like stroke are hurried away in the prime of their strength, and the height of their sins? What had the danger of her Eternal Salvation been, if at that time, in that extremity, she had been to begin to call upon God, and to learn the practice of her Duty to him, just when she was summoned to appear before his Judgment Seat? How happy was it for her, That the Lord came at an hour, that he was not lookt for; she was found as a good and faithful servant: and therefore might look to enter into the joy of her Master. To her then, to live was Christ, and to die gain.

But the loss is to the survivors; great cause had a Father to desire that such a Child should live to be a comfort to his Age, and pay her last duty to his Memory: He knew her worth, and he blest God for her; and hath as just cause, as ever any Parent had, to lament her Death: and yet he de-

clares that if he might by his wish, he would not for his own advantage, do her the wrong to recal her into Life, causing her to leave that place of happiness into which he firmly believes her Spirit is receiv'd. And as her Noble Lord still increas'd his esteem and Love, the more he observ'd her discreet, Vertuous and Pious Deportment: So in that her surprising danger, he shew'd an unfeign'd concern; nothing was spar'd, no cost, no assistance that might relieve her Pains, or retrieve her Health. And when the last moments, when the appointed Change came, that undaunted, that approved Valour was overcome; he abandon'd himself to Grief, and confest that in this appearance Death was, even to him, exceeding terrible. And, as her concern for his Honour surmounted her Affliction, and restrain'd her from desiring his stay at home last Summer, when his duty called him to the War abroad: So, his unquestionable Resolution was not able to hold in his Tears for this Loss, and to suppress any of the violences of Grief, by which in his Death she would have been transported.

Neither may only such as are Relations be concern'd in so mournful an occasion: Humanity may engage us to lament so great worth in the flower of Youth taken away, without any Branch or off-set left: and Christianity may teach us to bewail the removal of a Light that began to shine so brightly in the midst of us, promising to be an ornament and blessing to the place. But, as

to her self, (if the Spirits of the Just departed hence, are allowed to know what is done here on earth, and were permitted to speak to their surviving friends) she would intreat them to moderate their Lamentations: shewing their respects to the deceased, by honouring her in the imitation of what is well pleasing to God, and tends to his Glory and their own Salvation. And therefore whoever of the same Sex, value her character, and desire the same in the like occasion, may they let their adorning be, not the outward one of *plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and putting on of apparel, but let it be the hidden man of the heart, the ornament of a quiet and meek spirit.* An abstinence from all appearance of Evil, a jealousie over all their behaviour, and the beauty of holiness. These Graces will be always of great price, (tho Favour be deceitful, Comeliness soon blasted, and Portions flown away.) They who abound in these, will be dear to their Parents, beloved by their Husbands, respected by all that value Goodness, blest in their Children, lamented in their Deaths, and above all, together with the Saints, heirs of the Grace of Life Eternal.

Wherefore since we know that all things come to an end, and that the time of our departure may be near, it concerns all who have daily intimations of their Mortality, to consider what will stand them in stead after a very transitory Life: And therefore to *work out their salvation with fear and*

and trembling, while it is called to day; while they have the Light. For there is no device, nor knowledge, nor work, nor wisdom in the grave, whither we all go. They then will be found wise, who have lived, as if they designed chiefly to save their souls; setting their affections on things above, and not on a world whose fashion so soon passeth away: and who, as this Religious Person, are rich in Faith, and full of good works, which will accompany them beyond the Grave.

If we make this good use of the constant admonitions which are given to us, who are yet in the land of the Living, or rather in the land of the Dying: If we bless him for the examples of such as have been Lights in the midst of perverse generations: And if in our Deeds we endeavour to transcribe them: If we chiefly bless him, for begetting us to a lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible reserved in the Heavens, through the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead: Then shall we live, Then shall we also die, unto the Lord; and as sure as Jesus died, and rose again, even so them that sleep with Jesus will God bring with him; when the Spirits of just men shall be made perfect, and when with the General Assembly, and Church of the Firstborn, in Heaven, they shall ascribe to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, all Honour, and Glory, and Salvation, for ever.

